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1 February 1960

EXC-0279-60  
COPY 2 OF 3

Dear Dick:

PROGRESS REPORT #5

This progress report, covering activity in the month of January, will be kept very brief, in view of the extensive meetings held in connection with the suppliers' meetings January 19th through 22nd.

1. The basic aircraft configuration has been firmed up, as a result of both high and low speed wind tunnel tests and A. R. tests at the [REDACTED]. Those sections which are not firm are those still subject to further A. R. investigations--namely, the inlets to the nacelle, the lateral fairing of the ejector, the leading and trailing edge detail construction, and the filler material for the chines. Enough information is available to institute construction of about 90% of the aircraft.
2. A firm go-ahead for 12 aircraft, plus a large static test element of the aircraft, was given the contractor January 30th.
3. Technical progress on the engine installation has been good, with excellent cooperation from P&W. An agreed ejector configuration has been finalized, and plans for its construction and test have been firmed up. Work is progressing [REDACTED] on the inlet spike control, with great emphasis being placed on fail-safe design.
4. The aircraft weight was reduced 1,000 pounds, because of the necessity for maintaining high penetration altitudes. This weight reduction was obtained by reductions in the final air conditioning system, reduction of the payload from 800 pounds to 600 pounds (it had been officially set at 500 pounds), reduction of the landing gear weight, and a number of other detail changes. The greatest hazard to the weight set-up at the present time is the unknown construction of the trailing and leading edges and the fillers of the chines. It is believed that reasonable allowances have been made for these elements.
5. Construction of the fuel test rig and the large "hothouse" is proceeding with great speed. The major elements should be in place within four to five weeks.
6. An additional 17 engineers are being cleared. This will complete the engineering personnel requirements, except for the flight test types, who are not required for a number of months.
7. A small order of titanium has been received and various test parts are being fabricated. Extreme precautions are being taken to obtain good quality control. A copy of information given to each man in the

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shop, which is supplemented by a great deal of verbal instruction, is attached. Titanium availability has been improved but is still 4 to 6 weeks later than initially expected. The steel strike has had a vital bearing on availability of titanium.

8. The forward fuselage jig is well underway, with other jigs in design.
9. The configuration of the autopilot, stability augmentor and inertial guidance system is being discussed [REDACTED] 25X1A5a1
10. A large number of special machinery items and heat treat furnaces are being procured through Air Force sources. We are receiving the usual excellent cooperation from our Air Force friends in the supply business. A LAC capital expenditure appropriation of an additional [REDACTED] (bringing our total to date to over [REDACTED]) has been approved for those items required for the project which are also applicable to other phases of the aircraft business after the completion of this project. It is not believed that any important capital equipment applicable only to the project will be required or requested, at least in the near future. It is suggested that, when flight test and static test periods arrive, special test elements such as oscillographs, strain gages, and temperature indicators be loaned from Air Force stocks. This has been a common practice in the past on other military projects and it would certainly seem to be applicable to this project. I believe much equipment of this type is available in Air Force stocks because of the current lack of aircraft development in other fields.

Sincerely,

cc: J. P. ✓  
E. K.  
Attachments (2)

Feb 14 1969

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